

UP-135

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(U.S.-MEXICO)

MEXICO CITY (UPI)--U.S. AMBASSADOR JOSEPH JOHN JOVA TOOK ISSUE PUBLICLY TUESDAY WITH PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA AND OTHER MEXICAN OFFICIALS WHO HAVE EITHER CHARGED OR INSINUATED THAT THE U.S. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY WAS INVOLVED IN LAST FRIDAY'S DISORDERS AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

ECHEVERRIA SUFFERED A MINOR SCALP WOUND WHEN HE WAS FORCED TO FLEE THE CAMPUS AS SEVERAL THOUSAND ANGRY STUDENTS HURLED BRICKS, BOTTLES AND STONES.

AT THE TIME, HE CHARGED THAT THE YOUTH HAD BEEN "MANIPULATED BY THE CIA," ALTHOUGH HE FAILED TO REITERATE THAT CHARGE IN SUBSEQUENT COMMENTS ON THE INCIDENT. HE DID INSIST THAT THEY WERE "MANIPULATED", HOWEVER.

IN THE WAKE OF HIS INITIAL ACCUSATION, VARIOUS OTHER MEXICAN OFFICIALS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT THE CIA COULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED.

JOVA, APPROACHED BY MEXICAN NEWSMEN MONDAY WHEN HE WAS INAUGURATING AN EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR, WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE CHARGES.

HE DECLINED AT FIRST, SAYING THAT IT WAS HIS POLICY NOT TO MAKE ANY COMMENTS ON THE CIA. THEN HE RECONSIDERED AND REPLIED:

"WHAT I CAN STATE CATEGORICALLY IS THAT, IN THE UNFORTUNATE EVENTS OF LAST FRIDAY PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA SHOWED HIS DIGNITY AS A MAN, AND AS A MEXICAN, AND DEMONSTRATED GREAT COURAGE, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT NO AMERICAN AGENCY HAS HAD THE LEAST CONNECTION, NOR HAS ANY AMERICAN AGENCY INSPIRED ANY ACT OF THAT NATURE, NOT AT ALL."

AN EMBASSY SPOKESMAN SAID THAT JOVA "STANDS BY" THAT STATEMENT TUESDAY AND WOULD HAVE NO FURTHER COMMENT.

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